



INFORMATION SHEET

Parent Information Network Clearinghouse

Exceptional Student Services

Arizona Department of Education



Orthopedic Impairment

What is an Orthopedic Impairment?

Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) §15-761(19) states: " 'Orthopedic impairment' means one or more severe orthopedic impairments and includes those that are caused by congenital anomaly, disease and other causes, such as amputation or cerebral palsy, and that adversely affect a child's performance in the educational environment."

Examples of orthopedic impairments that may be caused by birth defects are clubfoot and absence of one or more limbs. Orthopedic impairments that may be caused by disease include Muscular Dystrophy or Arthritis. Other causes of orthopedic impairment may include fractures, which cause stiff and/or immovable joints called contractures.

A student is determined eligible for special education services if: 1) the criteria of the state definition of a student with an orthopedic impairment is met, 2) the multidisciplinary evaluation team (MET) determines that the orthopedic impairment negatively impacts a student's educational performance, and 3) the child is in need of special education and/or related services to benefit from his/her education.

Occasionally there may be a student who has been in an accident and has broken bones; he/she may be eligible under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 for a temporary placement while healing from the injuries.

How Common is an Orthopedic Impairment?

In the 2002-03 school year, 684 students in Arizona were classified under Orthopedic Impairment and received special education services. This number represents 0.07 percent of the 912,083 students enrolled in Arizona public schools as of October 1, 2002.

What Effect Does an Orthopedic Impairment Have on a Child?

Some students are only mildly affected by their orthopedic impairment. Children who are moderately or severely affected may have difficulty with coordination, the ability to move, stamina, communication, or learning. Many times adjustments can be made in the environment and instruction, and special education may not be needed in order for the child to make enough academic progress. Others may be extremely limited in their activities and learning, and may require intensive medical and/or educational help.

Educational services are provided in a variety of settings including: regular classrooms, resource rooms, special classes, hospitals, the home, or special schools. The unique academic needs of each student, and required related services, are important considerations in determining placement in the least restrictive environment (LRE) for the student. Related services may include such things as assistive technology, special transportation, environmental adaptations, adaptive physical education, occupational therapy, physical therapy, or school health services. Communication with the school will be extremely important for the success of any necessary therapies or modifications in the environment.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Amendments of '97 implementing federal regulations require all IEP teams to consider Assistive Technology (AT) along with other special factors. Orthopedic impairments usually require a more extensive evaluation to identify the child's unique educational needs.

References

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities. (2000). *General information about cerebral palsy, fact sheet #2*. Washington, DC: NICHCY.

Resources

Books for Adults

Baker, B. L., Brightman, A. J., Blacher, J. B., & Heifetz, L. J. (1997). *Steps to independence: Teaching everyday skills to children with special needs*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing.

Geralis, E. (1998). *Children with cerebral palsy: A parent's guide*. Rockville, MD: Woodbine Books.

Miller, N. B. & Sammons, C. C. (1999). *Everybody's different: Understanding and changing our reactions to disabilities*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing.

Videos

Video and book lending library bibliography. Special Needs Center, Phoenix Public Library, Phoenix, AZ.

Organizations/Hotlines/Web Sites

Arc of Arizona, 5610 S. Central Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85040, 602-243-1787, www.arcarizona.org

Arizona Governor's Council on Spinal and Head Injuries, 10640 N. 28th Dr., Ste. B102, Phoenix, AZ 85029, 602-863-0484, www.azheadspine.org

Arthritis Foundation, 1313 E. Osborn, Ste. 200, Phoenix, AZ 85014, 602-264-7679. 616 N. Country Club Rd., Tucson, AZ 85716, 520-917-7070, www.arthritis.org/

Easter Seals of Arizona, 903 N. 2nd St, Phoenix, AZ 85004-1996, 602-252-6061 or 800-626-6061 www.easter-seals.org/

Enhancing Arizona's Parent Networks (EAPN) www.ade.state.az.us/ess/eapn/

March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation, 1616 E. Indian School Rd., Suite # 200, Phoenix, AZ 85016, 602-266-9933. 7290 E. Broadway, Suite #G2, Tucson, AZ 85710, 520-298-5490, www.modimes.org

Multiple Sclerosis Society, 626 N. Craycroft Rd, Ste. 116, Tucson, AZ 85711-1441, 520-747-7472 or 800-344-4867, www.nmss.org/

Muscular Dystrophy Association - USA, National Headquarters, 3300 E. Sunrise Drive, Tucson, AZ 85718, 800-572-1717, www.mdausa.org/

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS), www.niams.nih.gov/

National Spinal Cord Injury Association www.spinalcord.org/

Office for Children with Special Health Care Needs and CRS, 150 N. 18th Avenue, Suite 330, Phoenix, AZ 85007, 602-542-1001 www.hs.state.az.us/cfhs/ocshcn/

Parent Information Network, Arizona Department of Education, Exceptional Student Services, 1535 W. Jefferson St., Phoenix, AZ 85007, 602-364-4015 or 800-352-4558, www.ade.az.gov/ess/pinspals/

Pilot Parents of Southern Arizona, 2600 N. Wyatt, Tucson, AZ 85712, 520-324-3150 or 877-365-7220, www.pilotparents.org/

Raising Special Kids, 2400 N. Central Ave, Ste. 200, Phoenix, AZ 85004, 602-242-4366 or 800-237-3007, www.raisingpecialkids.org/

Spina Bifida Association of America, Arizona Chapters, 1001 E. Fairmont, Phoenix, AZ 85034, 602-274-3323. 2600 N. Wyatt, Tucson, AZ 85712, 520-324-3340, www.arizonasba.org

United Cerebral Palsy, 1802 W. Parkside, Phoenix, AZ 85027, 602-943-5472. 3941 E. 29th St., Tucson, AZ 85711, 520-795-3108, www.ucpsa.org

Williams Syndrome Association, P.O. Box 297, Clawson, MI 48017-0297, 800-806-1871 www.williams-syndrome.org/